



**Department of Health Services - State of Wisconsin  
Town Hall Results  
Consumer (IRIS Program)**

**Gladys**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Transportation to work shops.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Fill the car up when transporting consumers.

**Marilyn**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

The new privacy law went to far and tons of people are falling through the cracks because no one can get help until they are in crisis and parents and friends are held in suspension unable to connect with professionals.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Hundreds of \$ are being thrown in the trash just in the hi rise in my neighborhood alone. These are crutches, walkers, lift chairs, shower chairs, etc. Why not loan instead of buy. Most of these items can be sterylized. Also people call an ambulance for any reason because its free of charge. If they were charged even a small amount they wouldn't be quite so quick to call especially when there are other ways to get transportation.

**Houston**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Keep BadgerCare, SeniorCare, IRIS, Long Term Care via COP, CIP, and Katie Beckett.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Expand COP & CIP, IRIS, & Katie Beckett. These programs have proven that community based care is less costly than institutional care, never mind that people can more easily participate in the community as fully as they are able to if they are not in institutions. Disabled man on Title 19 has wife attendant with no health insurance. The wife became sick finally went to the ER too late and died.

**Jane**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Continue to provide the flexible, self-directed, funding through the IRIS program. People who have choices about their lives, will be more happy, healthy and productive. Medicaid funding/restrictions/process for acquiring durable medical equipment is full of barriers and discriminatory practices for the people who depend on this funding.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Support service provider agencies who provide cross-categorical services, client-centered supports and have a philosophy that promotes independence and quality of life for individuals with disabilities, should be the norm not the exception. Research Todd Steven and Associates of Oshkosh and discover what 'Support Without Walls' looks like. Also, make full use of the newly released Medicaid rules designed to make the program more flexible, efficient, and provide better care for lower costs. Wisconsin is one of 15 states that has a chance to make good choices and promote the least restrictive environments with flexible programming. It is the duty and the responsibility of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to not only utilize these federal funds, apply the guidelines of the new rules to all of its current policies and newly innovative services, but to be accountable to the people who will benefit from a service system that believes all people have a place in our communities. 'Cost savings' does not mean 'cut services'. It means develop what works and trim what does not.

**Timothy**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

None

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

1ST IDEA. I am not someone with a child, but I am an adult with a disability on Medicaid. I think we can reduce costs by actually not going to things like iris and family care. All these are is middlemen, and middlemen always take a chunk of the money. Why should companies be getting money for their profit line that can be going to the people who need it or actually saving money. Medicaid could just as easily hire people that would be responsible for people with permanent disabilities that would normally qualify for iris or family care. Companies are more concerned with profits and will ration as much as they can. Why should we give money to their profit line? You can still give as much money as say iris does for their members and still save money because money isn't going to a company's profit line. And even large nursing homes are farms for profit. Even non-profit nursing homes would rather put the money into needless yearly remodeling rather than pay for more staff to make life better for their patients and to make healthy patients. 2ND IDEA. I believe people with severe disabilities, adults and children, should be able to have their spouse or parents and even parents of children under 18 be their PCW. Where it might seem this would spend money, actually this will save money. See you don't have to pay a family member quite as much as you would a medical professional from an agency or such. Pay them enough so that they can even stay home as their job and this still would be cheaper than paying a professional. And also you would get a definite better quality of care and from people that actually care personally about the person with disability needing care. Of course you can't always be guaranteed quality of care from family members but the odds are more that way. 3RD IDEA. Through Medicaid (not iris or family care) allow adults and parents to get some of their supplies through, for instance, the grocery store. Many products can be purchased cheaper than if they were considered medically related and again they don't take cost as much as a Medical Supply place. I mean things like adult diapers and diapers. Also Medical Equipment like blood pressure cuffs and also oxygen meters can also be bought cheaper at the store or pharmacy and doesn't consider raising the price just because it is through Medicaid. If people could purchase these items themselves they would be the consumer and the supply places or stores would not try raising the price simply because it is through Medicaid. Even Amazon.com has blood pressure cuffs. 4th IDEA This relates somewhat to my third idea. I needed an oxygen meter. I searched on-line for a good one and with reasonable cost. I find one that was \$144. I had to go through the prior authorization process. When the prior authorization finally came through Medicaid decided to pay 13 months for \$30.00 a month instead of buying it outright. So instead of paying \$144 they actually paid \$390. I'm not sure if the prior authorization people thought I was going to get better before the 13 months were up or if they thought I would die first. It doesn't seem like the people who are doing prior authorizations are actually reviewing the case. So I propose that prior authorizations actually review the case with the reasons indicated for needing something and also ask the Physician questions if they need more information. People who do the prior authorizations can have a little education and common sense. This will save money by not spending more when they can spend less for something. For instance, again supplies from grocery stores like diapers and blood pressure cuffs. Even Amazon.com has great deals on blood pressure cuffs. 5th IDEA Allow people on Medicaid to get married and not have to worry about the spouse having assets. You'd think that this would cost more money because people will be coming off of Medicaid if you don't change it because we're over our resource limit. Well actually we just don't get married so we don't come off of Medicaid so you don't save money you just keep people down. People just get divorced to go on Medicaid. Plus keeping people from getting married is just not right. Also many just live in sin rather than lose Medicaid. And don't forget again care from a spouse means healthier people on Medicaid. And for the whole our economy the spouse and doesn't have to go into poverty just to put someone back on Medicaid. And this saves money in government programs for the poor with regard to welfare. 6th idea. if you absolutely have to bring back institutions don't bring back large ones. Also most nursing homes only follow Medicaid rules when there is somebody from Medicaid there and they fudge their documents. Make the nursing homes more like assisted living with only three or four to a building. And there should be people on staff to be able to take residents into the community to do things like to socialize with people who aren't handicapped. They have these types of homes in other states and they have found healthier and happier people. To tell you the truth, people feel regular nursing homes are much like prisons. People who are happier have been proved to be healthier and need less medical attention which is also savings to Medicaid. I would rather be in my home and I think Home Care could be cheaper in the long run. Even if you have to have a CNA for someone with Alzheimer's 24/7 it's still cheaper than an institution would charge. 7th idea. if governor walker actually made it so that seniors who meet the Medicaid spend down would not have to pay property taxes they would be able to keep their homes longer. Also provide Home Care. The state would lose money on property tax but have more savings keeping Elders out of nursing homes. Many Elders on Medicare actually go to Medicaid because they have small problems with daily chores like a simple shower or remembering medications. It would be a lot cheaper

having someone coming in to giving their medications and than an institution or nursing home. And keeping Elders out of nursing homes as long as possible will help save tons of money and have healthier Elders. Also with less people going to nursing homes institutions would automatically have to be smaller with less maintenance then a humongous building with all that can go wrong there. Also you wouldn't have people needing who need rehabilitation right next to people there for psych reasons. And why can't rehabilitation be done in the home with physical therapy. Again healthier patients mean less Medicaid costs and people in their homes much more cost savings. Elders on Medicaid obviously can't afford taxes. Also if you keep people not having to pay their property tax so they can keep their homes you have spending more of their own money on their care because hey are on Medicare instead of on Medicaid. Setting their money on care of on spend down.8th IDEA. Make programs like Mapp easier to understand and less complicated. Also make it the norm for people with disabilities that are permanent. Many are afraid of going to work because they have to sign up for a different program than regular Medicaid and they are afraid there could be the possibility of a gap in coverage. And for instance, when you have over \$360,000 in medical costs a year like myself you cannot afford to have a gap in coverage. I would be happy to pay into Medicaid if I was making a reasonable amount of money. As long as I end up with more than I have on SSI. But again the possibility of lack in coverage scares me of course institutions scare me even more. Another reason I'm afraid of going on Mapp is because I have a business making websites. Some years I have more sites to create than other years. And I don't try to get too much work because I would have too many assets. If there was something that causes less apprehension people would be more apt to work and pay into the system. Also people with disabilities would actually help the economy with their hard work. We don't want to take from society, but in many cases we have to. And also the current system is obviously not working. I believe this is because the rules are keeping us down and if the rules were changed we might actually pay some of the money back. My grandmother always said even if you know you can't finish a task try and you might finish most of it or you might surprise yourself and finish the whole task. I have heard many of my friends say they are not allowed to work when on Medicaid. Having mapp rules AT the starting gate instead of some seemingly far distance away will make for incentive. Also many of us can only do so much in a day. And those with heart problems have all they can do to finish the day in those with severe retardation will never be able to work. But many will.

**Jessica**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

I am concerned for the programs that are being considered to be cut with the budget. I need all the services that Iris provides and medical assistance provides because without them I will not have a quality of life! I used medical assistance for a my medical appointments and care providers reimbursement for pay. I also use Iris to supplement my freedoms and quality of life. It was is working with you years ago and I am requesting assistance again on not only my behalf by others that do not have a voice. I am all for trying to balance budget but please do not take away or decrease funding for these programs thank you

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

None

**Cynthia**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Thank you for FC and IRIS. It provides her with a chance to live in her community and not a nursing home.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

None

**Christine**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Use of peer specialists.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Peer Specialty saves money. Peer specialists are mental health consumers with jobs. They work in many settings, including hospitals and community settings. Training peer specialists is not costly and is time-effective. Peer specialists embody recovery and this leads to recovered consumers on a wide scale. Recovered consumers integrate in society free of supports.

**Barb**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

State should work with non-profits & charities, they know how to serve poor/less fortunate/disabled with little resources. Innovation is essential to solving these problems. Pursuing a partnership with the gov. and non-profits worlds would surely create thinking outside the box.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

None

**Randy**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Don't freeze family care. Son is aging out of K-12 day system. His biggest concern is that his son stays at home so that parents can care for him.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

None

**Zwier**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Better oversight of who is receiving support.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Make sure the people receiving the funds deserve them. As a parent of children with chronic illness, I see many others who receive support for special services that aren't really necessary. The funds go to their personal expenses. I've seen motor homes purchased, vacations taken, video game systems purchased, etc. Does anyone ever meet the recipients? So many lies, so much money wasted and consequently, fewer truly needy people helped because of the lack of funds.

**Karen**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

None

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

I think people on any health insurance plan should pay more for being a smoker, overweight, etc. Perhaps a tax deduction for anyone within their BMI range is also an incentive for being healthier. I think the government should also change the food stamp/quest program by allocating so much money on the card for vegys/fruit, another amount for healthy grains, etc. These people tend to be making poor food and health choices and are a drain on the states resources. With todays computer systems, you would think this would be easy to implement.

**John**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Provide either 1) free universal health care for the citizens of Wisconsin or 2) a government-run public option to compete with insurance companies in Wisconsin.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

The Department of Health Services will have more money if corporate tax loopholes are closed and when the wealthiest of Wisconsin pay their fair share of taxes.

**Randy & Jo**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Be an active part of the fiscal responsibility process in Madison. Better to stabilize the programs, than to lose them altogether.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

I understand the need for Wisconsin to get its fiscal house in order. If we don't, the system will collapse and the programs will all fall apart. With that said, I would like to see the budgets rolled back to sustainable fiscal levels. This will put pressure on resources, and some of the people getting those services will be pinched. Better pinched, than gone completely. To sustain the programs the state needs private sector jobs! The more people we have earning income, the more revenue generated to support programs. We have two adopted children that were abused with drugs and alcohol by their mothers while still in the womb. They are in the program and their lives will completely unravel without the medication they are on. When I had a good job, with Health Insurance, their needs were taken care of. Today, the job is gone, and the health care with it. It will be a balancing act, and I pray the smart minds and cool heads will prevail. Help those who can't help themselves' and create opportunity for the rest. I am ok with the able bodied among us getting off the couch and into a good job!

**Damian**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Why did Ms. Rhoades object to Health WI? Was there anything worthwhile in it? What will Gov. Walker do to improve access and affordability over and beyond making cuts?

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

None

**Ardyth**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Don't cut, innovate.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Peer run centers that are alternatives to hospitalization (such as those in Georgia & Nebraska).

**Sally**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

None

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Refurbish equipment (wheelchairs), reuse vehicles (wheelchair accessible).

**Amy**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Help keep Gov. Walker from shredding our budget in all of the areas that people need assistance most. These are people, including me, who cannot always take care of themselves and I'd like to know what Walker will do with all of the homelessness and rise in mental health diagnoses (because people, without Badger Care, can't get their meds), and ultimately (and most sadly) the new population of criminals.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Fight. Fight for us. Don't let this mogul of a business man turn our state into a for-profit enterprise. This is not a business like he is used to being so successful with. These are people's basic rights. Stop him....I don't know how, but stop him.

**Craig**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

Caretaker concerned about policy changes to IRIS.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

Increase IRIS enrollment.

**Prunckle**

**What could the Department of Health Services improve?**

I'm very please with the level of care that is provided through my Badger Care Plus Core Plan. It would be nice if a larger variety of prescriptions were offered, but largely the care received is excellent.It is unfortunate that DHS services may be cut by the current legislators. I implore the lawmakers of Wisconsin to not cut services offered by DHS.

**Do you have any cost savings suggestions for the Department of Health Services?**

A moderate increase in co-pay would be tolerable.Offering access to more services online or via touch-tone phone menus may generate more cost savings.Ideally the original Universal Healthcare proposed by the Obama Administration would have solved a lot of these problems.Further cost savings could be achieved through streamlining the medical billing process. This would create savings on both ends.